Ways to Improve Health & Well Being IN THE NORTH END AND BROADWAY

“There is a very strong correlation between income and life span,’ Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said in an interview. ‘But it is not inevitable. There are things we can do to change the life trajectory of people. What improves health in a community? It includes wide access to social, educational and economic opportunity.’”


50% of residents in the Broadway and North End neighborhoods said that if parks and open spaces were closer to their residence and had more public facilities like paths, fountains, & bathrooms they would utilize them more.

“Work, school, taking care of children, and home care make it very difficult to set aside time for exercise—you have to sacrifice things.”

35% of residents in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods wish they had received a better education.

Those living in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods are less likely to feel they have access to physical activities than those in the rest of Newport due to lack of transportation, available facilities, affordable classes, etc.

19% Only 19% of residents in the North End eat fruits and veggies once a day. That’s less than 1 in 5.

The Newport Health Equity Zone is a city-wide coalition mobilizing residents and resources of the Broadway and North End neighborhoods to make Newport a place where everyone can thrive.
A lack of employment opportunities were cited as an issue in our community. Those in our community that have achieved their life goals noted that post secondary education was key, as were the champions in their family, school and community that showed a path forward.

RESIDENT-LED DATA COLLECTION FOUND THAT A PATH TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IS BASED ON ENSURING A WEB OF OPPORTUNITIES.

The following **Core Barriers** were found to impact residents of all ages and in all areas of health:

**TRANSPORTATION**
Lack of adequate transportation limits access to food, exercise, jobs, school, and medical care.

**SOCIAL CONNECTION**
Social cohesion is the degree to which people feel connected to each other and opportunities in their community. Across the lifespan residents desire a deeper connection to their community. Teens would like more age appropriate activities in their neighborhoods, and seniors often feel isolated. Residents of all ages feel disconnected from neighbors, community opportunities, and pathways for success.

**LIFE STRESSORS**
Adult residents across the life span identified life stressors such as a lack of employment and taking care of children as barriers to exercising and eating well.

Residents highlighted these barriers to healthy eating & exercise: healthy food choices are expensive and not conveniently located for working adults & families/seniors with limited mobility. Finances, time and transportation limit options for exercise and cooking healthy ethnically appropriate foods, parks & open spaces don’t currently meet exercise needs, and school lunches are not as healthy as they could be.

Residents identify education as key to later success in life but many, in particular those from low income backgrounds, noted they gave up at a young age on dreams because they could not see a path forward. Many contained their dreams to achieving basic safety and security. The high cost of college was noted as a barrier.

Transportation is a significant barrier in the community. Residents need reliable bus transportation for healthy food, exercise and employment, and safe biking and walking routes, particularly for youth and seniors.

Teens want more things to do in the community and for the school curriculum to be more engaging. Middle school youth want more opportunities for movement and play during school time.

A lack of employment opportunities were cited as an issue in our community. Those in our community that have achieved their life goals noted that post secondary education was key, as were the champions in their family, school and community that showed a path forward.

Disparities by race, ethnicity, and neighborhood exist for those seeking healthy life choices. North End residents face higher barriers to healthy food options and opportunities for safe, affordable recreation compared to those living in the rest of Newport. Hispanic residents are more likely to feel isolated compared to white residents.
INITIAL IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Broadway and North End residents want to eat healthy, to be physically active, and to be fully engaged in education and economic life. Newport has many assets to build on to help all residents achieve these goals.

FOOD ACCESS AND NUTRITION
• Provide access to healthy, low cost food options where residents live
• Support residents in how to cook healthy meals with limited time
• Ensure school lunches are providing healthy choices
• Emergency food distribution options closer to the North End
• Spaces for gardening in the North End and Broadway

OPEN SPACE
• Reconfigure wealth of existing parks and open spaces to provide equipment and activities that meet the needs of teens, seniors, adults

TRANSPORTATION
• Make sidewalks safer and expand bike paths and walking paths
• Improve and expand reliable bus transportation to employment, food shopping, gyms, parks and to health and human services agencies

EDUCATION, INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
• Build on the existing strengths of the community to expand employment
• Build social cohesion so residents feel more connected to each other and community opportunities
• Enhance the school curriculum to ensure it is engaging for teens
• Provide more things to do for teens in the community outside of school
• Provide positive encouragement and pathways for low income youth

ARTS AND CULTURE
• Build on the arts and culture environment in Newport to offer activities for teens and expanded employment options

PHYSICAL HEALTH/EMOTIONAL HEALTH
• Transportation and affordable access to gyms and pools
• More time in school for middle school age youth to exercise and play
• Reconfigure existing parks and open spaces
Residents of the North End and Broadway Neighborhoods in Newport identify access to affordable, healthy food as a key to promoting good health.

Potential Improvements Residents Identified
- Provide access to healthy, low cost food options closer to where residents live
- Support residents in how to cook healthy meals with limited time
- Ensure school lunches are providing healthy choices that children and youth enjoy
- Provide emergency food distribution options closer to the North End
- Offer spaces for gardening in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods
- Ensure quality water at a reasonable price

Disparities in Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- Those who identify as Latino or Hispanic are more likely to indicate they need to shop off island for ethnic food.
- Those who use food stamps and those who identify as Black/African American are more likely to indicate that they are only able to grocery shop 1x per month, limiting access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- North End residents are more likely to indicate a need to use food pantries, churches, or community organizations as a source for food.
- North End residents are nearly two times as likely to indicate they have a barrier to getting the food they need and to indicate that they are eating fresh fruits and vegetables only 0-1 times per week.
- While most choose where to shop based on convenience, those with a disability choose primarily based on affordability.

BARRIERS RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED
Residents indicated that affordability, followed by quality, are barriers to getting the healthy food they need.

Limited bus transportation is a barrier for residents when shopping for healthy food.

When residents choose to shop off island for food it is usually for affordability.

In focus groups, when residents of Broadway and North End neighborhoods were asked “what keeps you from getting/beating/staying healthy?” one of the top responses was grocery stores being too far away.

Parents and youth discussed concerns about whether there are healthy options in school lunches that kids would enjoy. Youth would like more vegetarian, sandwich, and salad options.

Residents questioned the quality of the water for the price. Very high water bills are a concern for residents, particularly as they are unsure of water quality.
Residents of the North End and Broadway Neighborhoods in Newport identify barriers and opportunities for improved physical and emotional health.

**Potential Improvements Residents Identified**
- Increased transportation options and affordable access to local gyms and pools
- More time in school for middle school age youth to exercise and play
- Reconfiguration of parks and open spaces to provide equipment, facilities, and activities that meet the needs of teens, seniors and adults (see the Open Spaces insert for detail)
- Increased access to healthcare
  - Additional dentist offices that take Medicaid
  - Improvements in wait times and quality of care at local community health clinics and the local hospital emergency room

**Disparities in Physical and Emotional Health**
- Those living in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods are less likely to feel they have access to physical activities than those in the rest of Newport.
- Residents in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods are somewhat less likely to have health insurance than those living in other areas of Newport (84% versus 92%). Only 66% of those identifying as Latino or Hispanic indicate having health insurance versus 86% identifying as Black/African American and 91% identifying as White.
- Men indicate a wariness of doctor’s offices and are more likely to ask their parents first for medical advice.

“Staying healthy is difficult for lower-income residents that do not have the money.”

“Staying healthy is difficult for lower-income residents that do not have the money.”

**BARRIERS RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED**
Emotional health through work/school and life balance were identified as key to healthy living along with healthy eating, physical health, and exercise. Having a place to live and employment opportunities are also considerations for resident well being.

Residents in Newport are most likely to get their health information from their doctor, followed by a clinic or walk in center.

20% of Newport residents had their last checkup more than a year ago.

Residents expressed concerns about a lack of bus transportation to the Department of Human Services as well as to exercise facilities and other human service agencies in Newport.

When residents are really not feeling well they are most likely to go to the emergency room first, followed by their doctor (if the practice could fit them in).

Some residents choose to travel for health services due to a discomfort with wait times and quality of service at Newport health clinics and the local hospital.

“It’s not just money — time is a luxury.”
Residents of the North End and Broadway Neighborhoods in Newport identified updates to parks and open spaces as key to health, exercise, and quality of life.

**Potential Improvements Residents Identified**

**Improvements for seniors**
- Bathrooms and water fountains
- Safe, handicap accessible walking paths
- Walking groups
- Safe transportation to parks

**Improvements for teens**
- Park equipment and group activities appropriate for teen play

**Improvements for families**
- Shelters for parents from which they can watch their children and connect with other families
- Pools, splash pads, or sprinklers
- Safe biking: bike lanes and bike paths

**Improvements for adults in general**
- More and varied equipment including volleyball nets, chess/checker boards
- Gardening opportunities

**Disparities in Access and Enjoyment of Parks and Open Spaces:**
- Seniors, afraid to walk on unsafe streets and sidewalks, are not able to get to parks.
- 37% of those identifying as Black/African American and 26% of those that identify as “Other” indicate that they never or rarely visit parks or open spaces, compared to 13% of those that identify as White.
- North End residents utilize parks and open spaces less frequently and feel less safe in their parks and open spaces compared to other Newport residents.

**BARRIERS RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED**

The most common form of transportation to parks is on foot, followed closely by car. However, those under 20 and over 60 are far more likely to go by car.

Bike paths and bike lanes are a requested improvement for safe recreation across all age groups.

Those living in the North End neighborhoods report longer travel times and distances to frequently visited parks and open spaces.

50% of residents in the Broadway and North End neighborhoods indicate they would use parks more if parks and open spaces were closer to their residence.

62% of those with a disability cite usage would increase if parks and open spaces were closer to their residence.

Currently, residents most often use parks to get fresh air and quiet; to hang out with friends; to walk, run or hike, to picnic; for ocean swimming; to view wildlife; and to participate in community events.
Residents of the North End and Broadway Neighborhoods in Newport identify transportation as a key area in need of improvement to create a healthier community.

**Potential Improvements Residents Identified**

**Improve access to parks and open spaces:**
- For example, increased bus service would allow seniors with limited mobility and a fear of unsafe streets and sidewalks to visit parks more frequently

**Improve access to affordable healthy food shopping**
- Currently there is limited bus transportation to Stop and Shop and other key food shopping areas

**Improve access to physical activity**
- Residents currently lack sufficient transportation to nearby gyms and pools

**Improve access to employment, recreation opportunities, and services**
- Current bus service takes a long time, with limited routes, making it unreliable transportation to employment, education, recreation, and human service agencies

**Residents feel that the roads are unsafe for walkers and bikers, in particular for youth and seniors. They identified a need for:**
- bike paths and bike lanes
- walking paths in parks and open spaces
- safer sidewalks

**BARRIERS RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED**

All residents in Newport, including those living in the Broadway and North End neighborhoods, identify that most places they go to are within five miles of their home. Driving is the most common mode of transportation, followed by walking. Few residents bike.

Buses are often late and do not travel to key locations.

Residents in the North End and Broadway areas feel that there are not enough sidewalks, and existing sidewalks are not in good condition or well lit for safety at night.

Residents of Broadway and North End neighborhoods report the following:
- Drivers are unsafe, making the roads unsafe for walkers and bikers.
- There is a need for safer places for kids to ride bikes including bike paths and bike lanes.
- There is a need for more sheltered bus stops.
Residents of the North End and Broadway Neighborhoods identify the opportunities that contribute to well being.

Potential Improvements Residents Identified

Those in the community that have achieved their life goals, or feel they are on track to do so, identified two key factors to their success – education and champions in their family, and school and community that showed a path forward. Suggestions to improve education, innovation and economic opportunity included:

- Enhancing the school curriculum to make it more engaging for teens
- Developing more community leaders as a means to positive community change
- Providing more out-of-school-time activities for teens to do in the community
- Providing positive encouragement, role models and pathways for low income youth
- Building on the existing strengths of the community to expand employment

Disparities in Education, Innovation and Economic Opportunity

- College expenses are a barrier for low income residents.
- Many low income residents say that from a young age they did not see opportunities in their community or a pathway forward to success. The limited range of perceived employment and educational opportunities was highlighted as a barrier by low income youth.

“Teaching should be more personalized to allow for kids to appreciate education more earlier on rather than as adults. Wish I had a better education so I could make more money.”

“Teachers need to make it more about wanting to learn. More field trips, instead of sitting in a classroom all day. School isn’t learning anymore it’s just passing. We’ll do everything to pass. Failure is not an option.”

BARRIERS RESIDENTS IDENTIFIED

Some residents cited giving up on goals at a young age because they did not see opportunities in their community or because their focus was limited to simply attaining safety and security.

Teens in the North End report feeling unsafe outside of their neighborhood.

Seniors report feelings of isolation.

35% of residents in the North End and Broadway neighborhoods wish they had received a better education.

Parents and youth feel school is not engaging enough for older youth. Parents also have concerns about whether Elementary class sizes are too large and whether the High School is a safe and positive, engaging environment.

When asked to reflect on how life has met their expectations, North End and Broadway residents expressed disappointment related to economic, employment, and education concerns. For example, many had hoped to be living more comfortably, have some extra income, and be in a different career.
EMPOWERING COMMUNITY RESIDENTS TO IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNITY:
The Newport Health Equity Zone (HEZ) envisions a city where structural, financial, and environmental barriers to health and well-being are eliminated; public policy fosters the good health of all residents; and residents feel empowered to control the health of their families and community. The HEZ is comprised of six working groups, each led by a community partner and paid community residents. The working groups are: (1) Transportation (2) Physical and Emotional Health (3) Open Space (4) Arts and Culture (5) Education, Innovation and Economic Opportunity, and (6) Food Access and Nutrition. The six agencies leading these work groups make up the Leadership Team. Each working group includes the lead organization, two resident consultants and between 2-7 community partners either with content area expertise or a general interest. The Women’s Resource Center, assisted by an empowerment evaluator, helped each group turn their broad areas of inquiry into appropriate community needs assessment tools. They also supported the groups in implementing these tools. An outside evaluator took all of these findings and helped to finalize the priority areas identified in this report by coding focus groups and interview data for common themes, analyzing survey data for key findings and then further identifying the most common themes by triangulating survey results, interviews and focus groups.

THANKS TO OUR RESIDENT CONSULTANTS:
Margaret Carlin, Neyda DeJesus, Penny Fitch, Renee Harriston, Allyson McCalla, Tasha McCants, Niko Merritt, Latisha Michel, Jeannette Oliveira, Phyllis Parker, Glory Ramos, Brandon Watson, & Trip Wolfskehl

AND THANKS TO THESE PARTNER AGENCIES:

BE A PART OF THE CHANGE – HOW YOU CAN HELP
If you are a Broadway or North End resident or community leader interested in supporting future work to create a healthier community based on the needs identified in this report please contact Olivia Kachingwe at 401-846-5263 or okachingwe@wrcnbc.org. Visit NewportHealthEquity.com for more info.